

**WILLIAMSBURG CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MINUTES
March 8, 2004**

The Williamsburg City Council held a work session on March 8, 2004, at 2:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Stryker Building.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Ms. Zeidler, Messrs. Haulman, Houghland, Scruggs, and Tabb. Also present were City Manager Tuttle, City Attorney Phillips, and City Clerk Crist.

Staff Attending: Department Heads Nester, Clayton, Serra, and Assistant City Manager Miller.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Zeidler called the meeting to order.

Open Forum

No one wished to speak. The session was closed.

BACKGROUND PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSION

City of Williamsburg E-Government Site—Mark Barham, Information Systems Manager

Mr. Tuttle introduced Mark Barham, Information Systems Manager, to update City Council on the city's E-Government website and finance management.

Mr. Barham, with the assistance of Michelle Woolson, made a Powerpoint presentation to Council. He addressed the current e-government interactive services available on the city's website, the level of usage, who is using the site and "hits" per day, and how the system has been marketed to customers. To meet customer needs, the website is constantly changing. Mr. Barham explained what he hoped would be future services provided on line. Assisted by Ms. Woolson, he demonstrated how to pay a utility bill, a parking ticket, and how to register a child for youth sports. (Please see attached outlines.)

Council thanked Mr. Barham and Ms. Woolson for their clear presentation.

Mr. Barham assured Council members that the city's site is secure and credit card information is encrypted. He believed that in the future, it would be possible to conduct all city transactions on line.

Mr. Tuttle noted that the city has taken an incremental approach to on-line services and is moving along in steady progression. He will keep Council updated about new on-line services in the future.

Mr. Haulman suggested a convenient "New Resident" hit button be available on the city's homepage for people that are new to the area and to the website. Mr. Scruggs appreciated and recommended the Property Information available on-line. The Mayor suggested the

Arts Calendar be more easily accessible.

Virginia Environmental Excellence Program (VEQ)—Department of Public Works and Utilities Environmental Management System (EMS)—Dan Clayton, Director Public Works and Utilities

Mr. Tuttle said that the city is taking an active role in this exciting environmental program. He introduced Mr. Clayton.

Mr. Clayton said the city made the decision to take an active role in this environmental management program). He introduced Jon Roma, Al Brenick, Mike Hyleman, and Paul Reeser, the four-member team from the city shop that have trained and prepared to become certified by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). He said that Mr. Keith Boisvert of the DEQ was also present.

Mr. Boisvert recognized the city as a leader and partner in the EMS program and presented the Mayor and City Council with a framed poster. (Photograph taken of Mayor, Mr. Clayton, Mr. Boisvert, and team members.)

Team member Paul Reeser provided information about the program by Powerpoint presentation. He explained that the EMS was “A Set of Processes and Procedures That Allow an Organization to Analyze, Control, and Reduce the Environmental Impacts of It’s Activities, Products, and Services.” He provided an overview including the goals of an EMS, the basic elements of EMS, what the team and their training have accomplished, what they are currently doing, and their plans for the future. Council was provided with a copy of the EMS policy. (See Attached Information). Mr. Reeser concluded with “An EMS is a powerful tool to assist an organization manage environmental impacts efficiently and effectively and improve awareness. It takes the power of people to make an Environmental Management System.” The team will constantly be reviewing their procedures in the future and hope for continued certifications.

Mayor Zeidler complimented the team on their impressive presentation and program. Council members conveyed their appreciation of the team's work and foresight, and recognized Mr. Clayton for his leadership.

Rental Inspection Program—Update—John Catlett, Building Official

Mr. Tuttle introduced Mr. Catlett to update Council members on the current status of the Rental Inspection Program.

Mr. Catlett reviewed the many inspections that have been conducted in the last week. He reported on inspection statistics and showed photographs of conditions found during inspection, including violations and damage to the interiors and exteriors of dwellings. The number one interior violation was inoperable smoke detectors. Many plumbing, mechanical and electrical violations identified were hazardous, and some even life threatening.

Mayor Zeidler commented that this program is working to protect the health and safety of citizens. Mr. Catlett said the reception of the program has been mixed. Some people appreciate the services provided and are supportive; others are the opposite. Many people

recognize and appreciate the repairs to their property.

Council members were pleased with the initial results of the program. Mr. Catlett explained the inspection/re-inspection process and said that his staff does their best to accommodate the owner/tenant's schedule for inspections. Staff is working to correct unsafe hazards by applying the Virginia Property Maintenance Code.

Mr. Haulman thanked Mr. Catlett for his participation in the College program for students living in off-campus housing.

House Bill 828:

Mayor Zeidler asked Mr. Phillips to inform Council members about how the new legislative affects the city's rental inspection program.

Mr. Phillips said that the House and Senate have approved the Bill and it will now go before the Governor. It will eliminate the registration requirement, but does have a notification requirement pertaining to rental properties in conservation districts. It recites standards similar to the city's ordinance. The locality will have the right to require an initial inspection, but if the property passes, no additional inspection will be required for four years. It does away with inspection with a change of occupancy or ownership. Mr. Phillips said the legislation is an improvement over the current law. If the Governor signs this law, it will do away with some of the Dillon Rule.

Mr. Phillips said he is still waiting for the Judge's decision in the lawsuit against the city. He will work on drafting an amendment to the City Code to be in accord with HB 828, effective July 1. Some people have not scheduled initial property inspections at this point, and he suggested they go ahead and do so. The city is awaiting the Court's opinion, and in light of the new House Bill, inspections should continue.

Preview of City Council Meeting: March 11, 2004

Braxton Court Redevelopment Project: Mr. Houghland asked Mr. Tuttle to report to Council on the cost of underground wiring for the redevelopment project. He also asked about the implications of the new law regarding underground utility districts in this instance.

City Council Communications

Neighborhood Council Meeting: Mayor Zeidler reported that Brian Canon of the College of William and Mary reported on the Student Survey on Williamsburg Community Development at the meeting. The Mayor requested the Clerk of Council make copies of the report for Council members.

Mr. Nester continues to work with Sharpe Community Project students on a broader survey and for use in the Comprehensive Plan process. Mr. Nester plans to make two presentations. One to City Council at their April work session and then one to the Planning Commission the week following the Council meeting.

General Assembly Budget Process: The Mayor commented that the Hampton Roads Mayors and Chairs sent a letter to the General Assembly about tax restructuring and the

shifting of responsibility to local government. VML has asked local governments to please contact the General Assembly. A letter was received from Mayor Joe Frank (Newport News) addressed to John Chichester and William J. Howell at the General Assembly Building outlining his concerns and objections to HB 30. (See Letter)

Council members expressed their concerns about the actions of certain legislators, especially making the pledge of "no new taxes" at the State level, and knowing that costs will be shifted to local governments. Council members recognized, however, that representatives Barlow and Norment are responsible legislators. Mr. Houghland pointed out that state cuts affect college level funding of education, as well as funding for tourism. And the Mayor added transportation and rail as well. Mr. Haulman was concerned about unfunded state mandates that force local governments to cut services or increase taxes. Council agreed to take an official position on the House Bill.

Mr. Tabb Moved That City Council Take An Official Position As Opposed to House Bill 30 As It Now Stands. The Motion Was Seconded by Mr. Houghland.

Recorded Vote on the Motion:

Aye: Haulman, Scruggs, Zeidler, Houghland, Tabb

No: None

Mayor Zeidler asked that Mr. Tuttle prepare a letter opposing House Bill 30.

Schedule of Meetings: March 2004

Budget Work Sessions: Mr. Tuttle said the work sessions would be held on March 22 and March 24, 5:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building

QUEST: The training program for new city employees will begin March 23, 2004.

WRHA: Mr. Haulman reported that the Strawberry Plains Redevelopment Project was progressing with lots of construction going on. The Housing Authority will consider the Braxton Court Redevelopment Application at their next meeting.

Mr. Haulman commended the Chamber of Commerce for their support and work on the additional \$2.00 lodging tax.

Leadership Historic Triangle: Mr. Haulman said the deadline for filing applications is March 15.

OPEN FORUM

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Approved: April 8, 2004

Shelia Y. Crist
Clerk of Council

Jeanne Zeidler
Mayor